

BOSTONLYRICOPERA

NEW ENGLAND'S LARGEST OPERA COMPANY ANNOUNCES NEW FUNDRAISING LEADERSHIP, AN EXPANDED TEAM, AND A RENAMED DEPARTMENT

Former BSO staff member Yong-Hee Silver leads BLO's new Philanthropy Department.

BOSTON – May 10, 2023 – Boston Lyric Opera (BLO) announced today two additions to its fundraising team and a new name for the company's development function: the Philanthropy Department. Leading the team is former Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) Senior Major Gifts Officer **Yong-Hee Silver** who recently was named Chief Philanthropy Officer at BLO. **Ishan Johnson** joins BLO's fundraising team as Deputy Chief Philanthropy Officer.



Prior to her position at Boston Lyric Opera, Silver (l.) spent 17 years in the development office at the BSO – one of the region's top three non-profit arts organizations. While there, Silver managed the orchestra's giving societies and built relationships with donors who gave major gifts to the organization. Her long tenure gives her a comprehensive knowledge of the philanthropic environment and the passionate arts supporters in Boston. In addition to her work with the symphony, Silver's professional and volunteer accomplishments

include roles with the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Smithsonian Institution of History and Technology, as well as experience as a film producer, a campaign volunteer at Wellesley College (where she earned a B.A. with high honors in Art History), and a trustee of Longy School of Music.

"It's an exciting time to join this thriving organization, one of the most vibrant regional opera companies in the country," Silver says. "BLO's connection to operatic tradition and commitment to both broadening its audience and bringing the artform into the future made me want to be part of the team." On the department's new name, Silver says "development" describes our team's activity to sustain and grow the institution. The transition to 'philanthropy' connotes a new focus on *why* we do what we do."



Before joining BLO this month, Boston University graduate Ishan Johnson (l.) served as Associate Director of Philanthropy for the Art Institute of Chicago. While there, he strengthened the museum's relationships with key donors. Previously, he was Associate Director of Development for Chicago Opera Theater, where he oversaw individual and planned giving, special events, and the organization's first endowment campaign. Johnson was a mentor in the inaugural Opera Leaders of Color Mentorship Program with Opera America; he

holds a Vocal Performance degree from Boston University and had a professional opera career as a singer for more than a decade. In 2022, Johnson earned the Certified Fund Raising Executive credential.

"I'm delighted to have Yong-Hee and Ishan join our team," says BLO General Director and CEO Bradley Vernatter. "Yong-Hee's deep experience in the Boston philanthropic scene, and her knowledge of how Boston arts institutions can impact their fields on a national basis, make her a good fit for the ambitions that our board and I have for the Company in the future. Together as the leadership team, and with an established talented staff, Yong-Hee and Ishan will bring to BLO new supporters, new opportunities and a fresh perspective on the value we bring to Boston."

BLO has additional position(s) open in the new Philanthropy Department that will increase the current staff by 40 percent. Information on those jobs and how to apply for them is available at blo.org/careers.

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